



## Island Insight ep.306: Manatee Bones in Aruba's Prehistoric Culture



Page 10

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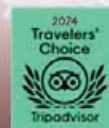
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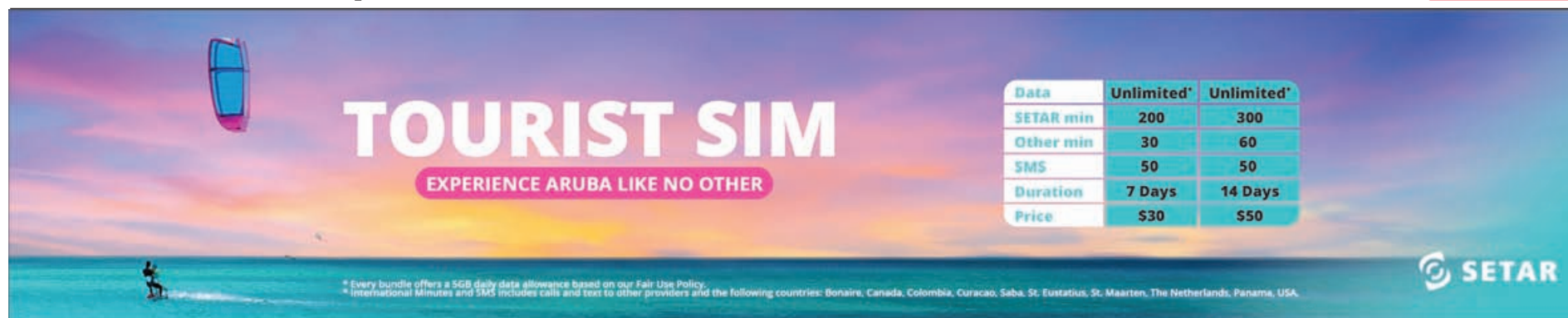
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**SETAR**

## Musk slams Trump's big tax bill as Republican senators race to meet a July 4th deadline

By **LISA MASCARO** and  
**MARY CLARE JALONICK**  
Associated Press

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — President Donald Trump wants his “big, beautiful” bill of tax breaks and spending cuts on his desk to be signed into law by the Fourth of July, and he’s pushing the slow-rolling Senate to make it happen sooner rather than later.

Trump met with Senate Majority Leader John Thune at the White House early this week and has been dialing senators for one-on-one chats, using both the carrot and stick to nudge, badger and encourage them to act. But it’s still a long road ahead for the 1,000-page-plus package.

“His question to me was, How do you think the bill’s going to go in the Senate?” Sen. Josh Hawley, R-Mo., said about his call with Trump. “Do you think there’s going to be problems?” It’s a potentially tumultuous three-week sprint for senators preparing to put their own imprint on the massive Republican package that cleared the House late last month by a single vote. The senators have been meeting for weeks behind closed doors, including as they returned to Washington late Monday, to revise the package ahead of what is expected to be a similarly narrow vote in the Senate. “Passing THE ONE, BIG, BEAUTIFUL BILL is a Historic Opportunity to turn our Country around,” Trump posted on social media. He urged them Monday “to work as fast as they can to get this Bill to MY DESK before the Fourth of JULY.”

But Trump’s high-octane ally, billionaire Elon Musk, lambasted the package — and those voting for it.

“This massive, outrageous,



**Elon Musk speaks during a news conference with President Donald Trump in the Oval Office of the White House, Friday, May 30, 2025, in Washington.**

pork-filled Congressional spending bill is a disgusting abomination,” Musk posted on his site X, as some lawmakers have expressed reservations about the details. “Shame on those who voted for it: you know you did wrong. You know it.”

Thune, like House Speaker Mike Johnson, has few votes to spare from the Senate’s slim, 53-seat GOP majority. Democrats are waging an all-out political assault on GOP proposals to cut Medicaid, food stamps and green energy investments to help pay for more than \$4.5 trillion in tax cuts with many lawmakers being hammered at boisterous town halls back home.

“It’d be nice if we could have everybody on board to do it, but, you know, individual members are going to stake out their positions,” Thune said Tuesday.

“But in the end, we have to succeed. Failure’s not an option.”

Speaker Johnson called Musk’s harsh criticism of the

bill “very disappointing.”

“With all due respect,” said Johnson, who said he spoke with Musk for more than 20 minutes, “my friend Elon is terribly wrong about the one big beautiful bill.”

At its core, the package seeks to extend the tax cuts approved in 2017, during Trump’s first term at the White House, and add new ones the presidents campaigned on, including no taxes on tips and others. It also includes a massive build-up of \$350 billion for border security, deportations and national security.

To defray the lost tax revenue to the government and avoid piling onto the nation’s \$36 trillion debt load, Republicans want reduce federal spending by imposing work requirements for some Americans who rely on government safety net services. Estimates are 8.6 million people would no longer have health care and nearly 4 million would lose Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program benefits, known as

SNAP.

The package also would raise the nation’s debt limit by \$4 trillion to allow more borrowing to pay the bills. Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer said Trump’s bill “is ugly to its very core.” Schumer said Tuesday senators should listen to Musk. “Behind the smoke and mirrors lies a cruel and draconian truth: tax breaks for the ultra-wealthy paid for by gutting health care for millions of Americans,” said the New York senator.

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office is expected to soon provide an overall analysis of the package’s impacts on the government balance sheets. But Republicans are ready to blast those findings from the congressional scorekeeper as flawed.

Trump Tuesday switched to tougher tactics, deriding the holdout Republican senators to get on board.

The president laid into Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul, the libertarian-leaning deficit hawk

who has made a career of arguing against government spending. Paul wants the package’s \$4 trillion increase to the debt ceiling out of the bill.

“Rand votes NO on everything, but never has any practical or constructive ideas. His ideas are actually crazy (losers!).” Trump posted.

The July 4th deadline is not only aspirational for the president, it’s all but mandatory for Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent who has warned Congress that the nation will run out of money to pay its bills if the debt ceiling, now at \$36 trillion, is not lifted by mid-July or early August to allow more borrowing.

Bessent has also been meeting behind closed doors with senators and GOP leadership.

The road ahead is also a test for Thune of South Dakota who, like Johnson, is a newer leader in Congress and among the many Republicans adjusting their own priorities with Trump’s return to the White House.

While Johnson has warned against massive changes to the package, Thune faces demands from his senators for adjustments.

To make most of the tax cuts permanent — particularly the business tax breaks that are the Senate priorities — senators may shave some of Trump’s proposed new tax breaks on automobile loans or overtime pay, which are policies less prized by some senators. There are also discussions about altering the \$40,000 cap that the House proposed for state and local deductions, known as SALT, which are important to lawmakers in high-tax New York, California and other states, but less so among GOP senators. □



# Texas considers banning products infused with THC derived from hemp, and retailers are worried

By NADIA LATHAN

Associated Press/Report for America

**AUSTIN, Texas (AP)** — Walk into enough gas stations and they're likely easy to find: gummies, drinks and vapes infused with THC, the compound that gives marijuana its psychoactive properties.

That's given lawmakers across the U.S. headaches over how to regulate the booming market, and it's a conflict now taking hold in Texas, where a proposed ban passed by the Legislature poses another major battle for the industry.

Texas has some of the nation's most restrictive marijuana laws, but thousands of retailers in the state sell THC consumables, underscoring states' struggle to set rules around the products that generate millions in tax revenue.

Republican Gov. Greg Abbott has not indicated whether he will sign the ban. Other states, including California, have imposed restrictions in recent years that include banning underage use and limits on the potency of the products, which are often marketed as legal even in states where marijuana is not.

"Governor Abbott will thoughtfully review any legislation sent to his desk," spokesperson Andrew Mahaleris said when asked for comment on the bill.

Texas tries to crack down The Texas bill would make it a misdemeanor to sell, possess or manufacture consumable products with tetrahydrocannabinol, or THC. The proposal shadows several other state efforts to crack down on a market that has exploded since a 2018 federal law allowed states to regulate hemp, which can be synthetically processed to create THC.

Hemp is a plant that is grown to make textiles, plastics, food and several other products.

It is related to marijuana and must contain less than 0.3% THC to still be classified as hemp under federal law.



Employee Savannah Gavlik displays THC products at the Dope Daughters dispensary that Texas lawmakers are seeking to ban, Thursday, May 29, 2025, in Austin, Texas.

Associated Press

The proliferating market has given residents in states with strict marijuana laws such as Texas a legal way to access products that can give them a similar high.

Nationwide, the substances are often sold through legal loopholes, despite concerns about potential health risks and a lack of oversight of how they're produced.

Republican Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick laid out bags of THC snacks on a table in front of a group of reporters last week to reiterate his determination for Texas to ban the products.

He said he wasn't worried about Abbott when asked about the possibility of a veto.

"This is serious business," Patrick said.

If enacted into law, Texas would have one of the most restrictive bans in the country, according to Katharine Neil Harris, a researcher in drug policy at the Baker Institute for Public Policy at Rice University.

"I'm not aware of any other states without recreational marijuana markets that also prohibit consumable hemp products from having any THC," Harris said.

A jumbled legal landscape States that prohibit recreational marijuana have also made efforts to regu-

late the THC market, including Alabama, Kentucky and Tennessee.

In Florida, Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis vetoed a bill last year that would have put in place age restrictions and banned marketing directed toward children, stating that it would hurt small businesses.

"There's such a variety in how states have responded to this," Harris said.

Texas has one of the most restrictive medical marijuana programs in the country, only allowing three licensed dispensaries to operate in the state to sell low-potency marijuana to residents with PTSD, cancer or other conditions. □

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# New Orleans jail escapee releases videos, prompting search of home where they were made, source says

By **JIM MUSTIAN and JACK BROOK**

**Associated Press/Report for America**

**NEW ORLEANS (AP)** — A man who identifies himself as a New Orleans jail escapee released videos on social media while still on the run from authorities, leading to a police raid that failed to recapture him, an Associated Press source says.

Authorities were so convinced about the authenticity of the videos that they searched a home a little over 2 miles (nearly 4 miles) from the jail late Monday where they believe the recordings were made by escapee Antoine Massey, according to a senior law enforcement official who spoke to The AP on the condition of anonymity. The official said he was not authorized to publicly discuss the ongoing investigation into the May 16 escape by 10 inmates.

Massey was not at the New Orleans home on the edge of the Fairgrounds and



**Residents watch as police pursue a fugitive that escaped from a New Orleans jail, Tuesday, May 20, 2025, in New Orleans.**

Gentilly neighborhoods, the official said, but authorities did locate some clothing they believe he wore during filming.

Authorities had been tipped to the videos, which were posted on Sunday, by relatives who recognized the residence from which

Massey was speaking.

State Police Superintendent Col. Robert Hodges said that despite the agency's confidence in its investigations, "things change at a moment's notice and it's usually because someone has helped them." He encouraged people to

keep coming forward with tips. Last week, authorities upped the reward for information leading to \$50,000 per escapee.

Authorities are racing to recapture Massey and convicted murderer Derrick Groves, now more than two weeks since the auda-

**Associated Press**

cious breakout. Eight of the escapees have since been recaptured.

Louisiana State Police, the agency leading the search for the fugitives, declined to comment on whether it had verified Massey's identity in the videos. The agency carried out the search related to the videos, which seemingly showing a man with the same facial tattoos as Massey sitting near a kitchen, which have since been removed from Instagram.

"Please, I'm asking for help," said Massey, appealing to President Donald Trump and several rappers including Lil Wayne, a New Orleans native, in one video. "When I get back in custody I'm asking y'all please to come and help." Orleans Parish Sheriff Susan Hutson called on Massey to surrender.

"Cooperating with law enforcement is in his best interest and may help avoid additional charges," Hutson said in an emailed statement. □

## U.S. says it broke up effort to bring toxic fungus to Michigan lab from China

By **ED WHITE**

**Associated Press**

**DETROIT (AP)** — A Chinese scientist entered the U.S. last year with a toxic fungus stashed in his backpack, federal authorities said Tuesday as they filed charges against him and a girlfriend who worked in a lab at the University of Michigan.

The pathogen is known as *Fusarium graminearum*, which can attack wheat, barley, maize and rice and sicken livestock and people, the FBI said in a court filing in Detroit.

The FBI said a scientific journal describes it as a "potential agroterrorism weapon."

Yunqing Jian, 33, and Zunyong Liu, 34, were charged with conspiracy, smuggling, making false statements and visa fraud.

"The alleged actions of

these Chinese nationals, including a loyal member of the Chinese Communist Party, are of the gravest national security concerns," U.S. Attorney Jerome Gorgon Jr. said.

Jian appeared in court and was returned to jail to await a bond hearing Thursday. An attorney who was assigned only for her initial appearance declined to comment.



**This image provided by United States District Court For The Eastern District Of Michigan shows toxic plant pathogens that a Chinese scientist entered the U.S. last year stashed in his backpack, federal authorities said Tuesday, June 3, 2025, as they filed charges against him and a girlfriend who worked in a lab at the University of Michigan.**

**Associated Press**

In July 2024, Liu was turned away at the Detroit airport and sent back to China after changing his story during an interrogation about red plant material discovered in his backpack, the FBI said.

He initially claimed ignorance about the samples but later said he was planning to use the material for research at a University of Michigan lab where Jian worked and where Liu previously worked, the FBI said.

The FBI said authorities found a scientific article on Liu's phone that was titled, "Plant-Pathogen Warfare under Changing Climate Conditions."

A week before arriving in the U.S., according to investigators, Liu exchanged messages with Jian, who said, "It's a pity that I still have to work for you."

The FBI said Liu replied: "Once this is done, everything else will be easy."

Months later, in February, FBI agents visited Jian at the campus lab. She said, "100% no," when asked if she had been assisting Liu with the pathogen at the lab. The FBI said it found a signed statement on her phone expressing her support for the Communist Party of China.

Messages between the two in 2024 suggest that Jian was already tending to *Fusarium graminearum* at the campus lab before Liu was caught at the Detroit airport, the FBI said. The university does not have federal permits to handle it.

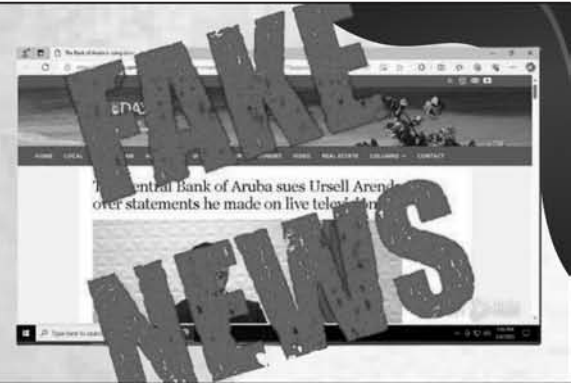
The U.S. does not have an extradition treaty with China, which makes Liu's arrest unlikely unless he returns. □



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## Wilders throws Dutch politics into turmoil with new elections now on the horizon

By MIKE CORDER  
Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands

(AP) — Populist far-right lawmaker Geert Wilders plunged Dutch politics into turmoil Tuesday by withdrawing his party's ministers from the ruling coalition in a dispute over a crack-down on migration. The remaining ministers will run a caretaker administration until new elections can be organized.

The decision means the Netherlands will have a caretaker government when it hosts a summit of NATO leaders in three weeks. Prime Minister Dick Schoof held an emergency Cabinet meeting to discuss the crisis and then visited King Willem-Alexander to offer him the resignations of ministers from Wilders' Party for Freedom.

Schoof, a career civil servant who was handpicked by Wilders a year ago to lead the government, said



Far-right lawmaker Geert Wilders talks to the media after pulling his party out of the four-party Dutch coalition in The Hague, Netherlands, Tuesday, June 3, 2025.

Associated Press

he had repeatedly told coalition leaders in recent days that bringing down the government would be "unnecessary and irrespon-

sible."

"We are facing major challenges nationally and internationally and, more than ever, decisiveness is re-

quired for the safety of our resilience and the economy in a rapidly changing world," Schoof said.

No date for a new election

has been set, but it is unlikely before the fall.

Schoof's 11-month-old administration goes down in history as one of the shortest-lived governments in Dutch political history.

Wilders announced his decision early Tuesday in a message on X after a brief meeting in parliament of leaders of the four parties that make up the fractious administration.

Wilders blames inaction on migration.

Wilders told reporters that he was withdrawing his support for the coalition and pulling his ministers out of the Cabinet over its failure to act on his desire for a clampdown on migration.

"I signed up for the toughest asylum policy and not the downfall of the Netherlands," said Wilders, whose Party for Freedom is still riding high in Dutch opinion polls, though the gap with the center-left opposition is negligible. □

## Syrian government and Kurdish-led force exchange prisoners in a step toward easing tensions

By OMAR ALBAM  
Associated Press

ALEPPO, Syria (AP) — Syrian authorities and a Kurdish-led force exchanged Monday more than 400 prisoners as part of a deal reached earlier this year between the two sides.

The exchange in the northern city of Aleppo is a step in the process of confidence-building measures between the government in Damascus and the U.S.-backed and Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces. A similar exchange took place in April.

Mulham al-Akidi, the deputy governor of Aleppo province, said 470 prisoners were released by both sides adding that the exchange "aims to reduce tensions on the ground." He added that if there are more prisoners they will be released in the near future.

Yasser Mohammed Hakim said he was

detained six months ago after he drove into an SDF-controlled area by mistake. The man added that he was held in a jail where members of the Islamic State group are held in Syria.

"They put us with the biggest terrorists," Hakim told The Associated Press after his release by the SDF. "I am a civilian who took the wrong road. I lost six months of my life." In March, Syria's interim government signed a deal with the Kurdish-led authority that controls the country's northeast, including a ceasefire and the merging of the main U.S.-backed force there into the Syrian army.

Since the deal was signed, the clashes between the SDF and the Syrian National Army, a coalition of Turkey-backed groups, almost stopped in northern Syria after months of fighting that left dozens killed or wounded on both sides. □



A recently released prisoner gestures during a prisoner exchange between Syrian authorities and the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces in the Sheikh Maqsoud neighborhood of Aleppo, Syria, Monday, June 2, 2025.

Associated Press



# Spanish government says housing market is not a 'free for all' after recent crackdown on Airbnb

By **SUMAN NAISHADHAM**  
Associated Press

**MADRID (AP)** — Spain's government wanted to send a message last month with its crackdown on Airbnb: that the Spanish economy and its housing market are not a "free for all" that value profits over the rule of law, a minister told The Associated Press on Tuesday. The government ordered Airbnb to remove almost 66,000 holiday rentals from the platform which it said had violated local rules by failing to list license numbers, listing the wrong license number or not specifying the apartment's owner. Airbnb is appealing the move.

Spain is one of the world's most visited countries. Last year, the Southern European nation of 49 million received a record 94 million international visitors. But a housing affordability problem that is particularly acute in cities such as Madrid and Barcelona has led to growing antagonism against short-term holiday



**Banners against tourist holiday rentals hang on the facade of a building in downtown Madrid, Spain, Tuesday, June 3, 2025. The writing in Spanish reads: "More neighbors, fewer tourists. Tenant power," and "Looking out for each other as neighbors, stirring things up."**

rentals. Airbnb is perhaps the best-known and most visible actor.

The Spanish government says the two are related: the rise of Airbnb and other short-term rental companies, and rising rents and

housing costs.

"Obviously there is a correlation between these two facts," Consumer Rights Minister Pablo Bustinduy told the AP. "It's not a linear relation, it's not the only factor affecting it, there are

many others, but it is obviously one of the elements that is contributing."

A recent Bank of Spain report said the country has a shortfall of 450,000 homes. In the tourist hot spots of the Canary and Balearic

Islands, half the housing stock is tourist accommodations or properties owned by nonresidents, the report said.

"Tourism is for sure a vital part of the Spanish economy. It's a strategic and very important sector. But as in every other economic activity, it must be conducted in a sustainable way," Bustinduy said. "It cannot jeopardize the constitutional rights of the Spanish people. Their right to housing, but also their right to well-being."

The country has seen several large protests that have drawn tens of thousands of people to demand more government action on housing.

Homemade signs including one that read "Get Airbnb out of our neighborhoods" at a recent march in Madrid point to the growing anger.

"A balance must be found between the constitutional rights of the Spanish people and economic activities in general," Bustinduy said. □

Associated Press

## Guatemalan court orders arrests of Colombian officials who led a U.N. anti-corruption mission

By **SONIA PÉREZ D.**  
Associated Press

**GUATEMALA CITY (AP)** — A Guatemalan court ordered Monday the arrests of Colombia's attorney general and a former Colombian defense minister who led a U.N. anti-corruption mission in Guatemala. Guatemalan prosecutor Rafael Curruchiche, who himself has been sanctioned by the United States and other countries for allegedly interfering in corruption investigations, had requested that an appeals court issue the arrest orders for Colombia's top prosecutor Luz Adriana Camargo Garzón, who was the chief of investigations of the Guatemala mission, and Iván Velásquez, who had led the mission and later was Colombia's defense minister.

Curruchiche said Camargo and Velásquez had committed illicit association during their investigation into bribes paid to Guatemalan officials by Brazilian construction giant Odebrecht.

Along with former Guate-

malan prosecutors working with the U.N. mission, Velásquez and Camargo were part of "a criminal structure led by the former CICIG commissioner," using the Spanish initials of the U.N. mission, Curruchiche alleged.



**Outgoing Defense Minister Ivan Velasquez introduces the new National Police Director Gen. Carlos Fernando Triana in Bogotá, Colombia, Feb. 14, 2025.**

Associated Press

Curruchiche had long ago focused his investigation on an agreement the anti-corruption prosecutors had signed with Odebrecht that would offer reduced penalties in exchange for the company's cooperation in the investigation. His boss, Prosecutor General Consuelo Porras, has also been sanctioned by the U.S. and other governments for blocking corruption investigations. Last week, a U.N. expert warned her office was using criminal law to pursue enemies.

Velásquez responded via X after learning of the accusations.

"So now the corrupt Guatemalan attorney general and her prosecutor Curruchiche designated as corrupt and sanctioned by the United States and

the European Union – extend their persecution for Luz Adriana Camargo and me," Velásquez wrote. "My solidarity with the former officials and so many Guatemalan citizens who the Attorney General's Office has forced into exile." Camargo did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Among those former Guatemalan prosecutors forced into exile was Juan Francisco Sandoval, who led the special prosecutor's office against impunity. Sandoval, who led the Odebrecht investigation with support from the U.N. mission and has been living in exile in the United States, said last month in a statement that Curruchiche's investigation was "a sham and a manipulation strategy." □





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## Alto Vista chapel and its link to Aruba's origins

According to Etnia Nativa, in the 18th century most of the inhabitants of Aruba were indigenous who lived on the north coast, one of the largest communities lived in Alto Vista.

As they were very religious, they had a chief with the name of Antonio Silvester who guided them in the Christian life and it was he who decided to build a stone chapel with a roof of corn rods, which would serve as a place of prayer. In 1750 it was blessed by Father Algemesi who came from Coro-Venezuela and appointed Domingo Antonio Silvester as the island's first prosecutor in the name of the Spanish crown and Rome. In 1752 the prosecution passed into the hands of Antonio Silvester's son-in-law, Miguel Álvarez, who continued to guide the parishioners in their prayers.

According to the book, The History of Alto Vista by R.H. Nooyen, it is not known



when Domingo Antonio Silvester came to Aruba from Venezuela. The elders believe Antonio was a Spaniard. In 1780, father Joseph Antonio de la Vegal called Bernardino Silvester, one of Antonio's sons with his wife Anna Cathalina Tromp, "neighbors and naturals of the island Aruba" and thus they became natives.

At the end of the eighteen century many inhabitants the island died as a result of the black fever epidemic and since people believed that the Alto Vista area was

the most infected, they began to build their homes further south within the Noord area, so the town of Noord began to grow into a community till getting its own Church. However religious festivals continued to be celebrated at this sacred native place, with the custom of arriving in procession to Alto Vista.

Two-hundred years after the beautiful time of Alto Vista, people can no longer see much of the town of Alto Vista from 1750. With a lot of work they found

the old foundations of the Church of the Queen of the Holiest Rosary to build a new chapel on the same place. The entire surrounding area was empty and desolated, making it hard to imagine that Alto Vista was a town at all. A hundred years later, people can see the remains of around twenty houses, some made of stone and others of clay. Nowadays, only around six of these houses remain.

South of the chapel in the yard two graves can be observed, there was the cemetery which father Pablo de Algemesi blessed. It is not certain, but it is believed that the two graves belong to Antonio Silvester and Miguel Alvares, according to Nooyen. About 50 meters near the chapel there are still the markings of an old house, where Antonio and Bernardino Silvester would have lived. About 200 meters from the chapel there is a water



tank which the locals call Tanki Cacique. In the past this tank was closed. But mostly water was brought out from the Poz di Noord, a well dug in the sand.

The chapel can be viewed from basically any point in the north side, even from Paradera and Sero Plat. All the historical remains around the chapel provide us with an idea on how the old people of Alto Vista used to live. Don't miss the opportunity to visit a place of historical significance with a window to Aruba's past. □

## Dining in? Try making a local favorite How to make "funchi hasa"

(Oranjestad)—A night in can be just as fun as a night out on the town, especially if you got the right snacks to munch on. One of the most famous Aruban snacks or appetizers is "funchi hasa" (fried polenta sticks). A super easy meal that adults and children will both enjoy. Here's how to make it!

### Before we start, get to know the basics

So what is funchi hasa? Funchi, or Aruban polenta, is a popular side dish for local dishes, like soups, stews and fried fish. Made from a corn flour, water and butter mixture, this appetizer is traditionally eaten alongside a warm meal. However, locals also like to fry sticks of funchi for a quick and filling snack.

### Ingredients (measured by heart)

1. Polenta flour\*
2. Water
3. Butter
4. Salt to taste

### Directions

Bring water to a boil in a medium-sized sauce pan. Add in some salt and butter to taste in the boiling water and let this dissolve and melt. Then, gradually add the flour while stirring with a wooden spoon. The mixture will start to begin to harden pretty fast, so be careful not to add too much. At this phase of cooking, you want a goopy thick mixture, but thin enough so you can continue to stir to get all the lumps out.

After reaching a semi-firm, yet flexible texture, grab a baking pan or any large, deep plate, and pour the mixture in. Be sure that this plate is wet or greased so that the mixture does not stick to the bottom. Let this cool completely while it firms up for the last time. Once it's cooled you can enjoy it as is, topped with some butter or shredded cheese. Or, you can take it to another level of deliciousness.

When your funchi is firm enough, cut it into strips (size is up to you). Heat up some oil in a pan and fry those babies up! After frying, you can top it with some cheese or enjoy it with your favorite dipping sauce.

Note: We recommend the FUNCHI



FRESKU polenta flour brand that is sold in all supermarkets on the island. You can also use yellow corn flour from the brand PAN. □

Photo credit of fried funchi sticks: Jacqueline Felida on Pinterest.





## Discover the New Menu at CAYA House: A Bold Take on Caribbean Flavors



(Oranjestad)—CAYA House Restaurant in Aruba invites you to experience a captivating new chapter in Latin-Caribbean dining with the launch of its latest menu items. Set in a beautifully restored traditional Cunucu house and surrounded by lush tropical greenery, CAYA offers an atmosphere where island heritage and modern culinary artistry come together in perfect harmony.

Rooted in the rich culinary traditions of the Caribbean—including influences from Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Aruba, Bonaire, Curacao, Mexico, Costa Rica, Colombia, Panama, Nicaragua, and Venezuela—CAYA is a celebration of flavor, warmth, and culture.

The new menu is a vibrant tribute to that heritage. Each dish is carefully curated to reflect the spirit of the islands, with a contemporary twist that elevates every bite.

Start with the **Celery Root Milanesa**, a beautifully breaded and fried celery root served with a fragrant Caribbean curry sauce, mango and papaya relish, butter bean and potato curry, and sautéed spinach. It's hearty, elegant, and deeply satisfying.

Seafood enthusiasts will savor the **Corvina**, pan-fried and glazed in pineapple hoisin, accompanied by cucumber and pineapple salsa, banana beurre blanc, and plantain fried rice—a delicate balance of tropical sweetness and



For something adventurous, the **Beef Tataki Chino Latino** offers a striking fusion of cultures, combining marinated tenderloin with potato and beet salad, piccalilli mayo, fried onion, cherry tomatoes, cucumbers, avocado, and a zesty Maggi seasoning vinaigrette.



And for those who crave bold spice and complexity, the **Jerked Tuna** delivers with a jerk crust, passionfruit leche de tigre, kefir lime oil, annatto oil, aji picante, orange crème, cilantro, red onion, and crispy baby calamari—an unforgettable dish that pushes the boundaries of traditional island fare.

savory depth.

The **Creole Fish** captures the soul of the Caribbean with snapper pan-fried and layered with Creole sauce, avocado salad, tostones, pickled onions, and rice and peas. It's a dish rooted in tradition and rich in flavor.



At CAYA, every meal is an experience—a celebration of life, flavor, and connection. Whether you're planning an intimate dinner or a lively gathering, CAYA promises an evening full of memorable moments. □

**Reserve your table now and taste the new flavors of CAYA. Call +297-699 39 82 to book.**

## Visit the natural bridges of Aruba!

(Oranjestad)—After you've visited the Alto Vista Church, the Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruins and the mini natural pool that is located right next to it, you're next up around the northern coast line must be the Natural Bridge. Once the largest natural bridge in the Caribbean, this bridge has

been a tourist attraction for many years.

The bridge was formed during thousands of years, cut and crafted by the wild waves that crash into the coral stone walls of the coast. Before its collapse, this bridge measured 30

meters in length and 7 meters in height, making it the biggest natural bridge in the Caribbean at the time. For many years, this site was also a frequently visited beach, as the bridge had a small opening through which the water would flow into the tiny beach.



Unfortunately in 2005, the bridge collapsed, and the little beach dried up. Despite this, this site remained a tourist attraction, with many visitors walking along the coral cliffs of the bridge to see the spectacular view of the northern coastline and the Caribbean Sea. Visitors can also still visit the souvenir shop on the left of the bridge entrance.



While the natural bridge no longer is functional, there is now a smaller natural bridge

very close. This bridge is often called the "Baby Bridge" or "Daughter Bridge". □





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**Infini Named One of the 10 Best Restaurants in Aruba by Caribbean Journal**



In a recent feature by Caribbean Journal, Infini has earned a coveted spot on the publication's list of the "10 Best Restaurants in Aruba for 2025." Known for spotlighting the finest in Caribbean travel and dining, Caribbean Journal praised Infini as a standout for its immersive, high-end culinary experience.

"Dining at Infini is an intimate encounter with culinary precision — just a few seats, one open kitchen, and a front-row view of Chef Urvin Croes in action," the article states. "For those seeking something rare and immersive in Aruba's dining scene, Infini delivers something unforgettable."

Located inside the exclusive Blue Residences, Infini is not your typical fine-dining venue. With their open-concept kitchen, the restaurant invites guests to become part of the culinary journey. Each course—meticulously prepared by Chef Urvin Croes and his team—blends modern techniques with the bold, authentic spirit of the Caribbean.

Chef Urvin, celebrated for his innovative approach to island cuisine



and crowned Iron Chef Aruba, has built Infini into a space where dining becomes storytelling. Every detail—from plating and pacing to personal engagement with the chef—is designed to elevate food into an experience.

With this recognition from Caribbean Journal, Infini continues to raise the bar for Aruba's culinary scene, offering something truly unique for food enthusiasts looking to go beyond traditional dining. □

**Prohibited by law: leaving the island with seashells, white sand or corals**



**(Oranjestad)—Often times, the customs department at the airport intercepts many tourists leaving the island with seashells, white sand and/or corals as souvenirs.**

Conforming to the international treaty of CITES and our local law which protects our Flora & Fauna, it is absolutely prohibited to take any seashell, sand and coral outside of Aruba. This is to protect our environment. The high number of seashells, coral and amount of sand

confiscated is very strange and it is suspected that our own locals are the ones selling these to the tourists, which is unacceptable.

Upon confiscation at the airport, you can also face a fine that they have to pay before leaving. This is surely not a pleasant experience for the tourist. This also leads to a negative reaction which can put our tourism in a negative light. Though we love to accommodate our visitors, let's all give nature the

respect it deserves by protecting our environment. Stop collecting seashells, white sand and corals from our shores and stop buying or accepting these from local sellers or companies.

We want our future generations and visitors to enjoy the beauty of our beaches, shells and corals in a sustainable way, without destroying or disrupting the Aruban ecosystem. Help us protect what is ours! □





Article by Etnia Nativa

WhatsApp us 592 2702 and book your Aruban experience!

Etnia Nativa is close to high rise Hotels



## Manatee Bones in Aruba's Prehistoric Culture

Episode CCCVI -306

**Etnia Nativa's narrative emphasizes the importance of reclaiming and recognizing Aruba's cultural roots—often overshadowed by its colonial past. The platform promotes the rediscovery of native traditions, history, and identity.**

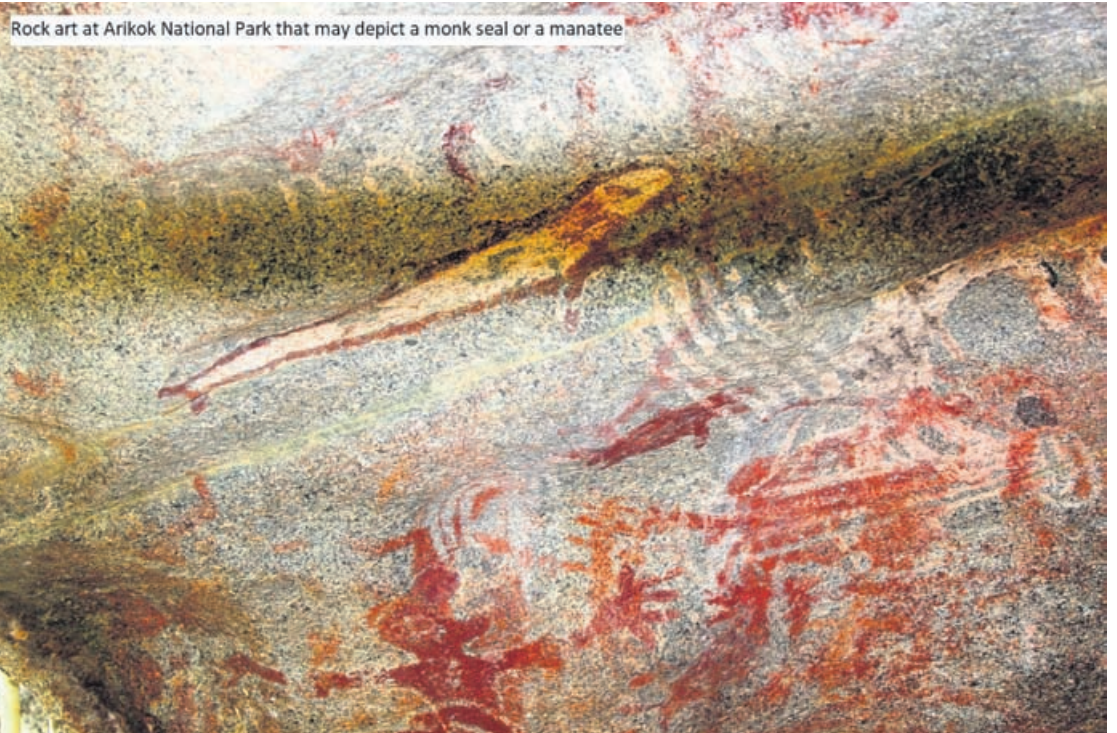
In this episode, we discuss the use of marine mammal bones and their significance in prehistoric times. These animals were not only a source of food; their bones also served as valuable material for making tools, ornaments, weapons, and other objects. Today, we focus on one particular sea mammal: the manatee (*Trichechus manatus*), a large, herbivorous marine animal that was a vital resource for many prehistoric coastal communities."

The manatee's feeding behavior resembles that of a cow—it grazes on seagrass, which primarily grows in shallow coastal waters. Its closest living relative is the elephant, and due to its grazing habits and marine environment, the manatee is commonly known as the 'sea cow.'

There are three main species of manatees: the Antillean or Caribbean manatee, the Amazonian manatee, and the African manatee. The Caribbean manatee once ranged along the Atlantic coastline from Virginia in North America to Brazil, with its primary habitat centered on the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico. Interestingly, manatees do not tolerate warm water well and often migrate northward during the summer in search of cooler water temperatures.

Prehistoric tools made from manatee bones are relatively rare but highly significant—especially in regions where manatees were naturally present and could have interacted with early human populations. These tools offer valuable insights into the subsistence strategies, cultural practices, and resource use of prehistoric peoples.

Small manatee bone tool, in Aruba's possession, was likely used in vomiting-inducing rituals during the yopo ceremony.



Manatee bone tools have been found primarily in Florida and the broader southeastern United States. Most of these tools date to the Archaic and Woodland periods (approximately 8000 BCE to 1000 CE), though their use may have begun even earlier.

Manatee bones—particularly their dense ribs and long bones—were fashioned into tools such as axes and adzes (for chopping or woodworking), pestles or hammers (used for grinding or pounding), and scrapers or digging implements. Occasionally, ceremonial or symbolic items made from manatee bone suggest cultural or ritual significance.

Manatee bone is exceptionally dense, making it well-suited for heavy-duty tools. This density results from an aquatic adaptation: manatee bones lack marrow cavities, which helps them stay submerged.

Manatee bone tools are often found alongside shell middens and other marine-based subsistence remains. Their presence at archaeological sites also reflects prehistoric hunting practices—manatees were hunted not only for their meat but also for their hide and bones.

Today, manatees are protected under laws such as the U.S. Marine Mammal Protection Act. As a result, any use of manatee bones is strictly prohibited without special permits.

Aruba's prehistoric inhabitants also used manatee bones to make tools. One such artifact in our possession is a small tool crafted from manatee bone, believed to be a sacred object used in ritual ceremonies—specifically to induce vomiting during the mind-altering yopo ceremony.

Yopo is a hallucinogenic substance still used by shamans in parts of South America. It is prepared from the seeds of plants that contain DMT, a powerful psychoactive compound. Inhaling even a small amount can induce a trance-like state known as hecura, a visionary experience that can last for several hours. □

If you enjoyed reading our ancestral stories and are interested in learning more about the true identity of the Aruban people, we invite you to visit Etnia Nativa—the only living museum of its kind in the Caribbean. A fascinating destination and cultural trendsetter since 1994, Etnia Nativa has contributed to the founding of Arikok National Park, the Archaeological Museum of Aruba, and various artisan foundations, among other voluntary initiatives.

Etnia Nativa offers a unique experience that connects visitors with the spirit and soul of the island's ancient heritage.

WhatsApp 297 592 2702

or etnianativa03@gmail.com



# Basic driving rules on Aruba: Roundabouts

(Oranjestad)—Have you ever felt confused when you're driving on the highways or backstreets of Aruba? Then we present a simple guide to some of the basic rules of Aruban traffic, along with some tips for things to look out for.

## Speed limit

Legally, the speed limit on the four-lane highways is 80 km/h. This speed limit also counts for the main roads that are connected to the highways. The minimum speed is 50 km/h. Most people drive around 60 km/h on the main roads and about 70 km/h on the highways. There are also areas that indicate a speed limit on a sign; these are usually around populated and school areas.

The four-lane highways contain the left-lane, also known as the "fast" lane for each direction. Here is where vehicles can drive up to the maximum speed. However, legally it is not permitted to drive for long periods of time on the left lane. This lane is primarily designed for drivers to switch lanes before a roundabout, for example, if your exit on the roundabout is on your far left. The general lane to drive in—both at maximum and minimum speed—is on the right lane.

## Roundabouts

Speaking of roundabouts, it is important to know where you have to enter and drive on the roundabout to make your exit. A good rule of thumb is to count the exits starting from your right side. So, exit 1 would be on your right; exit 2 would be straight ahead; exit 3 would be on your far left and exit 4 would lead to the road paralleled to the one you're on, heading in the other direction.



Most roundabouts have these 4 exits, so they are relatively simple. When you're driving on the four-lane highway, it is important to know when to switch to the left lane to make your exit: if your exit is on your far left (exit 3), then you need to switch to the left lane on the high way before nearing the roundabout so you can take the path that leads you directly to your exit. If your exit is on your right or if you're going straight ahead, you can keep driving in the right lane of the highway.

It's also important to know that vehicles about to enter the roundabout must yield to those already on it. A good rule of thumb is to look out if someone is coming from your left side.

However, other roundabouts can be

quite tricky to navigate...

## Watty Vos Boulevard (the "paperclip" roundabout)

Probably the biggest roundabout on the island, the "paperclip" roundabout on the Watty Vos Boulevard is one of the trickier roundabouts that could—and has—caused confused among both tourists and locals. However, once you take a good look at it, it's fairly simple. The basis is just the same as a regular roundabout (left exit? left lane! etc.), but instead of having four different exits like on a regular roundabout, now you have two extra; one on the right and the other on the left side of the roundabout. The rules don't change at all, you just have to keep an extra eye open.

## Airport roundabout

Ah, yes. The infamous airport roundabout. The favorite roundabout amongst local, because of its easy (hard) lanes that never (always) cause confusion among drivers. Sarcasm aside, this roundabout can be tricky to enter, especially when you're driving from the direction of the airport heading. When you're driving away from the airport reaching the roundabout, you'll be faced with three lanes. The far right lane is to take the exit 1 out heading east (right lane of highway). The middle exit is used for exit 1 (left lane of highway), 2 and 3. The far left exit is used to only exit on exit 3 (left lane of highway) and 4.

## "Las Americas" roundabout

The Las Americas roundabout is located near the Talk of the Town hotel, west from the airport roundabout. This roundabout may look like a regular roundabout—and for the most part, it is. However, when you are driving from the east going in the direction of town, please take note that there are two exits on your right.

When you're driving towards this roundabout, you'll notice that the road becomes wider, splitting into two lanes. The right lane is used to take the first and second exit on the right. If you want to exit straight ahead, you must drive on the left lane!

It's always scary to drive in new places where the traffic may look and work differently, but once you get it right once, you'll get the hang of it in no time. Additionally, all roundabouts and roads on Aruba have signs and arrows painted on the road to help guide you. So take your time, keep your eyes open and don't forget to wear a seat belt! □





# CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 46 Jug part

1 Light wind

7 Flight part

11 Crashed into

12 Do a KP chore

13 Apparel

14 Gumbo veggie

15 Taste bud locale

17 Play parts

20 Honshu port

23 Meadow cry

24 TV studio equipment

26 Noah's boat

27 In the style of

28 Tick off

29 Ticked off

31 River stopper

32 Throw with effort

33 Sampras of tennis

34 Phone photo

37 Locks

39 Revenue

43 Lends a hand

44 Justice symbol

45 Apple or pear

DOWN

1 Lingerie buy

2 Mob pariah

3 CPR expert

4 Gives off

5 Binary digit

6 Blissful place

7 Better half

8 Go by train

9 Blunder

10 Soup bit

16 Lose it

17 Disconcert

18 —

19 Have a private word with

21 Gold unit

22 Know-it-all's

24 Caravan carrier

25 Hoppy brew

30 Opposed

33 Praline nut

35 School member

36 Cuzco native

37 Topper

38 Melody

40 Unoriginal

41 Singer

42 Language

43 Tormé

44 Language

45 Language

46 Language

47 Language

48 Language

49 Language

50 Language

AXYDLBAAXR  
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

6-7 CRYPTOQUOTE

GB YC KGBQ PIHU'M BTUUC

GM PETKX NTHM VQ MSTQ, IUX

MOIM GH TUIRRQJMIVKQ.

— RISSGQ BGHOQS

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: SOME PEOPLE ONLY  
TO DO SOMETHING. I BELIEVE  
THAT, WHY SHOULD I WAIT FOR SOMEONE ELSE?  
— MALALA YOUSAFZAI

## Cruise ship Schedule: June 01 - 27 2025

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
SUN	01	SILVER SHADOW FREEWINDS - Dept.	08.00 ****	23.00 22.30	C E	1 -
WED	04	RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	C	1
TUE	10	CARNIVAL HORIZON CARNIVAL MARDI GRAS	09.00 13.00	23.00 23.00	C I	1 1
TUE	17	ADVENTURE OF THE SEAS CARNIVAL VISTA	07.00 13.00	16.00 23.00	B C	1 1
WED	18	CARNIVAL CELEBRATION RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS OASIS OF THE SEAS	08.00 08.00 07.00	22.00 23.00 16.00	C B I	1 1 1
TUE	24	CARNIVAL HORIZON	09.00	23.00	C	1
FRI	27	SEVEN SEAS MARINER	10.00	21.00	C	1

## Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic but important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

### Electrical power

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.

### Drinking water

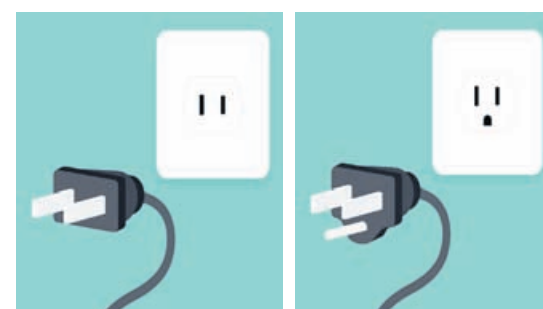
The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

### Supermarket hours

Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

### Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occur, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.





# Meta becomes the latest big tech company turning to nuclear power for AI needs

By **MATT OTT**

**AP Business Writer**

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — Meta has cut a 20-year deal to secure nuclear power to help meet surging demand for artificial intelligence and other computing needs at Facebook's parent company.

The investment with Meta will also expand the output of a Constellation Energy Illinois nuclear plant.

The agreement announced Tuesday is just the latest in a string of tech-nuclear partnerships as the use of AI expands. Financial details of the agreement were not disclosed.

Constellation's Clinton Clean Energy Center was actually slated to close in 2017 after years of financial losses but was saved by legislation in Illinois establishing a zero-emission credit program to support the plant into 2027. The agreement deal takes effect in June of 2027, when the state's taxpayer funded zero-emission credit program expires.

With the arrival of Meta, Clinton's clean energy output will expand by 30 megawatts, preserve 1,100 local jobs and bring in \$13.5 million in annual tax revenue, according to the

companies. The plant currently powers the equivalent of about 800,000 U.S. homes. □



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# Scientists say a record amount of seaweed hit the Caribbean and nearby areas in May

By **DÁNICA COTO**  
Associated Press  
**SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP)**

— A record amount of sargassum piled up across the Caribbean and nearby areas in May, and more is expected this month, according to a new report. The brown prickly algae is suffocating shorelines from Puerto Rico to Guyana and beyond, disrupting tourism, killing wildlife and even releasing toxic gases that forced one school in the French Caribbean island of Martinique to temporarily close.

The amount 38 million metric tons is the biggest quantity of algae observed across the Caribbean Sea, the western and eastern Atlantic and the Gulf of Mexico since scientists began studying the Great Atlantic Sargassum Belt in 2011, said Brian Barnes, an assistant research professor at the University of South Florida who worked on the report published on Monday by the University of South Florida's Optical Oceanography Lab.

The previous record was set in June 2022, with some 22 million metric tons.

"The peaks just seem to



**Sargassum gathers off the coast of Playa Lucía, Yabucoa, Puerto Rico, Monday, June 2, 2025.**

Associated Press

keep getting bigger and bigger year after year," he said.

But scientists don't know why yet.

"It's the million-dollar question," he said. "I don't have a supremely satisfying answer."

Three different types of sargassum exist in the Caribbean and nearby areas, reproducing asexually as they remain afloat thanks to tiny air sacs. They thrive in

different ways depending on sunlight, nutrients and water temperature, factors that scientists are currently studying, Barnes said.

Experts also have said that agricultural runoff, warming waters and changes in wind, current and rain could have an effect.

While large clumps of algae in the open ocean are what Barnes called a "healthy, happy ecosystem" for creatures ranging

from tiny shrimp to endangered sea turtles, sargassum near or on shore can wreak havoc.

It can block sunlight that coral reefs need to survive, and if the algae sinks, it can smother reefs and sea grasses. Once it reaches shore, the creatures living in the algae die or are picked off by birds, Barnes said.

Huge piles of stinky seaweed also are a headache for the Caribbean, where

tourism often generates big money for small islands.

"It is a challenge, but it's certainly not affecting every single inch of the Caribbean," said Frank Comito, special adviser to the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association.

In the popular tourist spot of Punta Cana in the Dominican Republic, officials have invested in barriers to prevent sargassum from reaching the shore, he said. In the Dutch Caribbean territory of St. Maarten, crews with backhoes were dispatched in late May as part of an emergency clean-up after residents complained of strong smells of ammonia and hydrogen sulfide, which can affect a person's respiratory system.

"The smell is quite terrible," Barnes said.

Meanwhile, in the French Caribbean, officials expect to soon use storage barges and an upgraded special vessel that can collect several tons of seaweed a day. The sargassum "disfigures our coasts, prevents swimming and makes life impossible for local residents," French Prime Minister François Bayrou recently told reporters. □

## An accidental discovery at a planetarium opens a window into the universe's inner workings

By **ADITHI RAMAKRISHNAN**  
AP Science Writer

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Scientists have unlocked one of the solar system's many secrets from an unexpected

source: a planetarium show opening to the public on Monday.

At the American Museum of Natural History last fall, experts were hard at work

preparing "Encounters in the Milky Way," a deep dive into our home galaxy shaped by the movements of stars and other celestial objects.

They were fine-tuning a scene featuring what's known as the Oort Cloud, a region far beyond Pluto filled with icy relics from the solar system's formation. Comets can hurtle toward Earth from the cloud, but scientists have never glimpsed its true shape.

One evening while watching the Oort Cloud scene, scientists noticed something strange projected onto the planetarium's dome. "Why is there a spiral there?" said Jackie Faherty, an astrophysicist

who leads the museum's educational programs and helped put together the planetarium show.

The inner section of the Oort Cloud, made of billions of comets, resembled a bar with two waving arms, similar to the shape of our Milky Way galaxy. Scientists had long thought the Oort Cloud was shaped like a sphere or flattened shell, warped by the push and pull of other planets and the Milky Way itself. The planetarium show hinted that a more complex shape could lie inside.

The museum contacted the researcher who provided the Oort Cloud data for the show, who was also

surprised to see the spiral.

"It's kind of a freak accident that it actually happened," said David Nesvorny with the Southwest Research Institute.

Realizing they'd stumbled on something new, the researchers published their findings earlier this year in The Astrophysical Journal.

The spiral is "a striking shift in our understanding of the outer solar system," planetary scientist Andre Izidoro with Rice University, who was not involved with the study, said in an email.

The discovery, relying on data on how celestial objects move and using simulations, will be difficult to confirm with observations. □



**This image provided by the American Museum of Natural History shows a new planetarium show showing a backwards S-shaped spiral in what's known as the Oort Cloud far beyond Pluto.**

Associated Press





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## Titleholder Swiatek to face No. 1 Sabalenka in semis after 26th straight win at Roland-Garros

By **SAMUEL PETREQUIN**  
AP Sports Writer

**PARIS (AP)** — Four-time champion Iga Swiatek's 26th successive win at Roland-Garros on Tuesday set up a semifinal clash against top-ranked Aryna Sabalenka in what will be their first French Open meeting. Swiatek defeated Elina Svitolina 6-1, 7-5 to extend her impressive run. The consecutive wins record on the Parisian red clay is Chris Evert's 29.

Sabalenka ousted Olympic champion Zheng Qinwen in straight sets to reach the Paris semifinals for the second time.

Having been searching for her best form in recent months, Swiatek, who struggled in the previous round, was in total control in the opening set.

She was made to work harder by her 13th-seeded Ukrainian rival in the second set, dropping her serve in the fourth game after hitting two straight unforced errors into the net. But Swi-



Poland's Iga Swiatek plays a shot against Ukraine's Elina Svitolina during their quarterfinal match of the French Tennis Open at the Roland-Garros stadium in Paris, Tuesday, June 3, 2025.

Associated Press

atek broke back immediately and took advantage of Svitolina's poor service game to break again with a thunderous forehand return and move up 6-5. Swiatek sealed the win with a final ace.

Swiatek has won five of the

six matches she's played on clay against Sabalenka, including a thrilling three-setter in Spain last year.

"The Madrid final against her is one of the best and most exciting finals that I have played," said Swiatek, who has not won a

title or reached a final since her victory at Roland-Garros last year. "It is always a challenge against Aryna." Sabalenka is trying to reach her sixth Grand Slam final, and first at Roland-Garros. "I'm super excited to go out there and to fight and

to do everything I need to get the win," Sabalenka said.

Sabalenka's consistency Sabalenka overcame a shaky start and windy conditions to prevail against Zheng 7-6 (3), 6-3 and extend her record against the Chinese star to 7-1.

The score did not fully reflect the closeness of the quarterfinal, though, with so little separating the rivals. But Sabalenka demonstrated why she was No. 1, making the difference on big points, while Zheng struggled with her serve in tense moments.

Sabalenka had lost her most recent match against Zheng last month in Rome, having previously dominated their first six encounters. She said that loss was actually a good thing in the middle of an already exhausting season.

"I was actually glad I lost that match, because I needed a little break before Roland-Garros," Sabalenka said. □

## Former UFC fighters file lawsuits, alleging the MMA promotion restricts their earning potential

By **MARK ANDERSON**  
AP Sports Writer

**LAS VEGAS (AP)** — Two former UFC fighters have filed antitrust lawsuits against the mixed-martial arts behemoth, alleging it operates as a monopoly that restricts their ability to maximize earnings. Phil Davis and Mikhail Cirkunovs, who fought under the name Misha Cirkunov, filed their lawsuits in U.S. District Court in Nevada against the Las Vegas-based UFC. Cirkunovs' complaint was filed on May 23, and Davis' was filed six days later. Philadelphia-based Berger Montague, which is represented locally by Las Vegas' Claggett and Sykes, is the law firm for both fighters. A message left with the Las Vegas firm on Monday was not immediately returned. Cirkunovs is seeking \$75,000 in damages. Davis didn't specify how much

money he is suing for. The UFC reached a \$375 million settlement in September in a class-action antitrust lawsuit brought by Cung Le, who filed his claim in 2014.

The UFC has not reached an agreement with Kajan Johnson, who filed his lawsuit in 2021. Both recent complaints made references to the Johnson case, with the Cirkunovs' suit saying they were similar.

"In previous hearings, Plaintiffs' own counsel expressed strong concerns to the Court about the weaknesses of the Johnson claims," the UFC said in a statement. "This new complaint (Cirkunovs) confirms that the plaintiffs in the Johnson case lack the standing to represent the proposed class.

"In addition, it confirms that the majority of fighters signed class-action waivers and agreed to arbitrate their claims instead of resorting to court procedures. □



Light heavyweight fighter Misha Cirkunov poses at a UFC Fight Night Vancouver official weigh-in in Richmond, British Columbia, Friday, Sept. 13, 2019.

Associated Press



# Knicks fire coach Tom Thibodeau after Eastern Conference finals trip, AP source says

By **BRIAN MAHONEY**  
AP Basketball Writer

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Tom Thibodeau just took the New York Knicks to the Eastern Conference finals, the deepest playoff march in 25 years for a franchise that re-emerged as a contender after he became their coach.

For that, he was fired.

The Knicks made what they called a "difficult decision" to move on from Thibodeau on Tuesday, believing it was a necessary step in their chase for a championship.

"We can't thank Tom enough for pouring his heart and soul into each and every day of being the New York Knicks head coach."

He led us not only with class and professionalism for the past five seasons, but also to tremendous success on the court with four playoff berths and four playoff series victories," team president Leon Rose said in a statement.

"Ultimately we made the decision we feel is best for our organization moving forward. Tom will always be a part of our Knicks family and we truly wish him nothing but the best in the fu-



**New York Knicks head coach Tom Thibodeau yells from the sideline during the first half of Game 6 of the Eastern Conference finals of the NBA basketball playoffs against the Indiana Pacers in Indianapolis, Saturday, May 31, 2025.**

Associated Press

ture."

The Knicks were eliminated by the Indiana Pacers with a loss in Game 6 on Saturday night, falling two games short of their first NBA Finals appearance since 1999.

Thibodeau was then asked what the Knicks needed to do this summer to go further.

"Like you would do after every season, you take a step

back, I think decompress," Thibodeau said. "You do a deep dive on the team and then you analyze what you think you need to improve upon."

The Knicks decided it was the coach. The move was made by Rose with approval from owner Jim Dolan, according to a person who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because that detail

was not included in the announcement. The firing was first reported by ESPN.

It's a strange decision by the Knicks, who had been one of the league's worst franchises for most of the 2000s until Thibodeau was hired in 2020. He promptly led the Knicks to the playoffs in his first season, winning his second NBA Coach of the Year award, and they have been a sol-

id contender in the East in recent seasons. They gave Thibodeau a three-year contract extension last summer.

Their big breakthrough came in 2024-25, when they knocked off defending champion Boston in the second round to reach the conference finals for the first time since 2000 when Thibodeau was an assistant under Jeff Van Gundy.

After they were eliminated Saturday, captain Jalen Brunson expressed his support for Thibodeau, bristling at a question about whether he believed the coach was right for the team.

"Is that a real question right now?" Brunson said. "You just asked me if I believe that he's the right guy? Yes. Come on."

Three days later, Thibodeau was gone despite a 226-174 record in New York. He has the fourth-most wins by a Knicks coach.

Thibodeau faced criticisms that his hard-driving style and overreliance on his starters wore down his players, the same ones that have followed him since the beginning of his head coaching career in Chicago. But his ways seemed to be working in New York. □

## Vikings' Purple People Eater Jim Marshall, the 'all-time iron man,' dies at 87

By **DAVE CAMPBELL**  
AP Pro Football Writer

**EAGAN, Minn. (AP)** — Former Minnesota Vikings defensive end Jim Marshall, one of the four members of the famed Purple People Eaters front that formed the backbone of four Super Bowl teams, died Tuesday after a long hospitalization for an undisclosed illness. He was 87.

The Vikings announced Marshall's death Tuesday on behalf of his wife, Susan. The native of Kentucky, who played at Ohio State and was drafted in 1960 by the Cleveland Browns, played 19 of his 20 seasons

in the NFL with Minnesota. The two-time Pro Bowl pick set a league record for position players with 282 consecutive games played, a mark held by Marshall until quarterback Brett Favre broke it, coincidentally, with the Vikings in 2010.

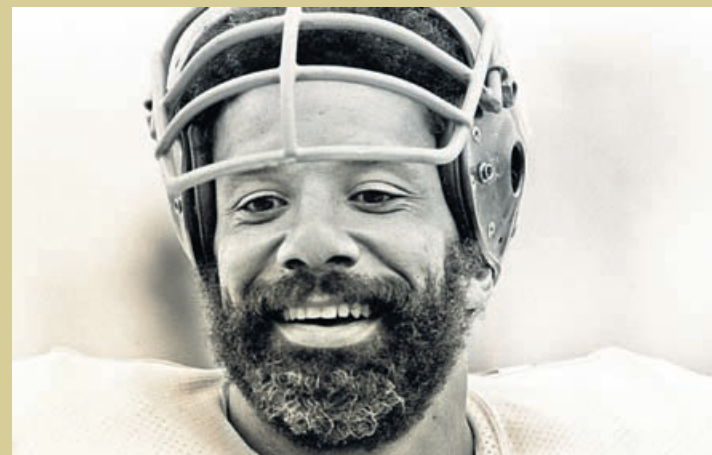
"No player in Vikings history lived the ideals of toughness, camaraderie and passion more than the all-time iron man," Vikings owners Mark Wilf and Zygi Wilf said in a statement distributed by the team. "A cornerstone of the franchise from the beginning, Captain Jim's unmatched durability and quiet lead-

ership earned the respect of teammates and opponents throughout his 20-year career. Jim led by example, and there was no finer example for others to follow.

His impact on the Vikings was felt long after he left the field. Jim will always be remembered as a tremendous player and person. Our hearts are with his wife, Susan, and all of Jim's loved ones." Though sacks weren't officially tracked by the NFL until 1982, Pro Football Reference recently completed a retroactive compilation of the primary pass-rushing statis-

tic and credited Marshall with 130½ sacks, which is tied for 22nd all-time. Two other Purple People Eaters

rank ahead of him: Alan Page (148½) is eighth, and Carl Eller (133½) is tied for 18th. □



**Minnesota Vikings' Jim Marshall is shown, Dec. 30, 1978, after practice for their NFC playoff football game against the Los Angeles Rams.**

Associated Press